



Alternate Channel

The newsletter for and about the members of the
LOUDOUN COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SYSTEM

SEPTEMBER 2003



RECRUIT CLASS #8

Front Row (left-right): Mike Pisauro, Kyle Stephens, Robin Hepp, Mark Wynkoop, Phil Abruzzese, and Steven Staley. Back Row (left-right): Brian Fluharty, Jeff Dunn, Joe Neiberger, Aaron Jacobs, Ed Butler, Jeremy Dorsey, Pat Dougherty, Tracy Lane, Ted Williams, and Jasen Dodson. See Article on Page 7

A Tribute to Ray Muth, Sr.

See Article on Page 3



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is a monthly publication for members, families and supporters of the Loudoun County Fire-Rescue system produced by the Loudoun County Department of Fire-Rescue Services.

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Alternate Channel

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Deadline Submission

Date:

Submissions for the Alternate Channel issues are due by the first business day of the previous month.

Example:

May 1st for June Issue

Company Reporters:

- Co. 1 Patty Murphy-Csizmadia
- Co. 2 Rick Reaves
- Co. 3
- Co. 4 Betty Dodge/Cyndi Vest
- Co. 5 Jim Reed
- Co. 6 Kay Parker
- Co. 7 Jeannie Cooper
- Co. 8 William D. Schwartz
- Co. 9 Sara Chamblin Case
- Co.10 Frank Fitchett
- Co.11 David Short
- Co.12 Greg Dailey
- Co.13 Marie Householder
- Co.14 Sue Johnson
- Co.15 Wilma Grant
- Co.16 Jim Dunagin
- Co.17 Rodney Krone, Jr.

A Tribute to Ray Muth, Sr.

"This county will never know the full extent of its debt to Ray Muth, Sr.," declared a mourner at the funeral of the former fire chief and president of the Ashburn Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department (AVFRD).

Ray, Sr. changed lives, putting many a boy on the straight and narrow, wrangling hard political decisions out of reluctant officials, sending hardened bureaucrats running for cover, stepping on tender toes, wringing stiff arms, holding weaker souls to uncompromising stands. He made the county change its ways. He made fire departments grow up. He fought hard for what he believed was right. He made an awful lot of people mad as hell and in the end they loved him for it.

When Muth returned from service during the Korean War and married Donna Ramaley of Ashburn in 1968, he married a fire department, too. Donna's father was a firefighter, and Donna and her mother served in the Ladies' Auxiliary. Two cousins are also firefighters. Dick Ramaley, Ray's new father-in-law, told him, "Welcome to the family, son, there's a meeting at the firehouse next week."

That was the start of a 35-year marriage with the lovely Donna and with the fire service. Muth served as an officer or director almost every one of those years. Donna served with the auxiliary, on the board and committees. Their sons, Ray, Jr. and Rick, grew up to be firefighters. "We didn't have beach trips when we were kids," says Ricky, "We went to firehouse meetings."

Muth was a mail carrier, starting when all of the greater Ashburn area didn't have 200 homes and retiring in 2002, when Ashburn had grown to 18,000 houses. At the same time, he worked for his uncle's home improvement business, acquiring ownership in 1982. When the fire siren went off, Ray left his job to run the call, then returned to finish his work.

Ray Muth lived by a code of honor, ethics and service that is rare today. Of his leadership, past department president Anne Marie Mason says "Ray stuck to his beliefs and would never compromise his integrity or the integrity of the department." Loudoun County Fire & Rescue Chaplain Charles Grant avers that Muth was "noted for fairness, consistency and honesty."

Serving on the Loudoun County Fire Association, the Fire Council and then the Fire & Rescue Commission, Muth made an indelible mark. Retired Philomont Fire Chief Stanley Lickey, Sr. said that it was Muth who fought hard for money for the fire departments. "If it hadn't been for him there would be no county benefits for volunteers. Ray lobbied hard to get us the insurance, the retirement benefits, the workers comp" even before incidents involving terrible injuries shocked people into realizing the value and sacrifice of volunteers. Andy Kelly, a career fire captain who, as a Round Hill Volunteer worked with Muth since 1977 on the Association, said that as a businessman, "Ray saw volunteers as unpaid County employees who

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COMPANY NEWS

Live Fire Training

Sometimes your good deeds come back to haunt you - and that is not always a bad thing. In 1992, the Sterling Volunteer Fire Department conducted a live burn in a donated house located in Broad Run Farms. The owner of the house wanted to removed the small one level house from the property and rebuild a much larger house. The donation of the old structure to the Fire Department helped them on taxes and demolition costs. Now, some 11 years later, their neighbor wanted to do the same thing. They contacted the Sterling Volunteer Fire Department and a day of live fire training was born.

On June 28th, the fires were lit but that was not without weeks of planning, logistics and permits. The structure was inspected and cleared for asbestos and a demolition permit had to be acquired. There were several issues along the way due to a discrepancy as to if the house lied in the flood plain or not. Once the demolition permit and consequential new building permit were received, class A flammable material had to be gathered for the burn. To Sterling Fire's good fortune, a local Boy Scout troop called up and wanted to know if the Fire Department could help them dispose of a truck load of wooden pallets left over from this spring's mulch drive. These pallets were combined with straw purchased from Meyers Farm in Leesburg to complete the ingredients for the fire.

The next thing that had to acquire was water - as Broad Run Farms is one of the few non-hydrant areas in Sterling. Lucketts Volunteer Fire Department stepped up by donating the use of their Tanker 10 and a driver for the day. Additionally, Ashburn Volunteer

Fire and Rescue allowed the use of their portable water pump. The training house backed up to the Potomac River but the approach was too steep and soft for a pumper to get close enough to draft. The portable pump was really helpful in gaining access to this water source.

Before things got started, a meeting was held at Station 18 with all of the drill participants. This was to make sure that every detail of the NFPA 1403 Training Safety Standard had already been met. About



Assistant Chief David Short review the sight safety plan prior to the start of the burn.



Crews prepare to attack the fire.

Photographs courtesy of George Short

35 members showed up for the drill and everyone got to work hard as the sturdy masonry construction of the house afforded at least 18 separate burn evolutions.

The training was interrupted a few times by actual emergency calls. One of these calls was a real fire at a restaurant near Dulles Town Center Mall. Quint 18 responded quickly as it was left in service in Sterling during the training exercise. The remainder of the units to complete the first alarm responded from the drill site. As those units left the drill, there were still enough fire fighters left at the drill



Fire Fighters Kevin Makowski, Kerry Smith and Jason Carlo take a breather between burns.

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OCTOBER 2003

Regularly Scheduled Monthly Meetings of the Loudoun County Fire & Rescue System

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Companies 13 & 17	2 Company 15	3	4
5	6 Companies 1,3,5,6,11,16	7 Rescue Chiefs	8 Company 10 Retention & Recruitment Committee	9	10	11
12 Company 14	13 Companies 2,7,8,9,12 BLS Committee	14	15 Fire Council	16	17	18
19	20 Company 1 ALS Committee	21 EMS Council	22	23	24	25
26	27 Companies 4 & 8	28 Fire-Rescue Commission	29	30	31	

SCHEDULED TRAINING

Firefighter I

Sept. 3 - Nov. 24, 2003

Pediatric Advanced Life Support

September 13-14, 2003

EMT-ST to EMT-Enhanced

Transition

Class Dates: September 7, 9, 14,
16, with county exam on the 21.

ALS Challenge

Prep Course-September 17th

Test-Sunday, September 21st

AHA CPR-Healthcare Provider

Class #7 Sun. October 19, 2003

Class #8 Sat. December 6, 2003

Loudoun County Fire & Rescue Commission

Doug Rambo
Allie Love
Mickey Buchanan
Fred Muller
Joe Habib
Ian Buchanan

Bob Griffin, Chief,
Loudoun County Department of
Fire & Rescue Services

Jim Burton,
Board of Supervisor

Donald A. Sabella, M.D., Medical Director

needed benefits like any other employee.”

Former Ashburn Fire Chief Ken Lawson testifies that Ray Muth fought as hard for the western end of the county as the eastern end. Kelly agrees, “Ray pushed for the building of the Round Hill station, then did the work on it at cost.” Jim Kiser, a Sterling Fire Department officer and retired career firefighter, served with Muth on the Fire Council and Commission. “Ray would push the western companies to recognize changing times and counsel Sterling to slow down, as we were the firebrands of the full speed ahead movement.”

Muth was an astute politician who never cared who got the credit so long as the community’s needs were served. A died-in-the-wool Democrat, he supported Chaplain Grant, an Independent running as a Republican, for the County Board of Supervisors. It was Muth who advised Grant to appoint Republican Dale Myers to the Planning Commission.

Johnson’s Charcoal Beef House at noon was ray Muth, Sr.’s stalking ground, Dan Corder, a career firefighter mentored by Muth, relates. “He knew the county bureaucrats and politicians would be there for lunch, and when they saw him coming in the front door, they knew they were in for it.”

Muth saw that Ashburn was on the cusp of change. Almost overnight, the sleepy, little volunteer fire department serving a sparsely settled farming community and village, with a hundred

or two calls a year, would become a major fire & rescue department running thousands of calls serving a dense population center. Ray instituted a mandatory 24/7 duty crew system. Development had hit Ashburn with a vengeance. Growing pains were traumatic, but “under Ray Muth’s leadership,” says Billy Goldfeder, then Loudoun County Fire & Rescue Services Director, “they embraced the need for change and prospered.”

Ashburn Assistant Rescue Chief Stan Murphy says that Muth “established our department’s financial security” because of his quick understanding of the opportunity presented when the county approved a proffer system. The Board of Supervisors had ruled that every development had to proffer for fire & rescue services, but “nobody knew what that meant,” says Melvin Byrne, who was president while Ray was chief. “None had ever been negotiated before. Ray sat down and worked up a formula.” Says Joe Habib, AVFRD Treasurer, Muth “personally tracked every development in the Ashburn first due area and made sure that the developers, homeowners associations and management companies were aware of their obligation to collect and pay proffers to the Ashburn fire department.

Other counties have destroyed their volunteer systems under the pressure of growth, and Muth was determined that was not going to happen in Loudoun County. He argued vehemently for paid people when he realized that the existing volunteer system in Ashburn couldn’t take care of the growing commu-

nities needs. “Ray recognized the need for career firefighters early on,” says Corder. “He believed career and volunteer could be partners, and pushed for a dual system.”

Habib says that the fire department was Muth’s “life and blood. He put his own money and his employees into the firehouse. He did the siding and repairs, never billed for small jobs, ran the Christmas tree sales, the ham & oyster dinner with Donna, etc. Ray’s secretary, Mary Beth Frye, handled all the social hall rentals and oversaw cleanup and maintenance of the hall. She helped me with the accounting, tracing invoices and writing checks. She also did all of Ray’s Fire Commission correspondence. All on Ray’s payroll.”

“He was the most complex and interesting personality I ever met,” exclaims Corder, who worked for Muth’s home improvement business for 12 years, starting at age 17 as a high school kid hanging around the fire department. After Corder became a career firefighter, he still worked part time for Muth. “During the recession in the 70’s,” Dan reminisces, “business was terrible. Ray didn’t have jobs, but he kept the kids working by having them salvage aluminum or whatever even though it was costing him three times what he’d make out of it.” Muth, Corder says, “always had an unshakable belief that things would get better if you just hung in there long enough.”

“Just about every teenaged boy in Ashburn worked for Ray Muth at one time or another,” says Byrne. They were expected

to join the fire department, and remarkable number of them went on to be career firefighters.

Talkative as all get-out, the man was joyfully and ferociously argumentative, but as everyone who ever fought with him agrees, he never carried a grudge. "You could have a knock-down, drag-out fight with him," Captain Corder grins, "and then he'd say, 'Come on, I'll buy you lunch. He proved you can be tenacious, aggressive, and right or wrong without being disagreeable.'" Friends for two decades, Grant had his rounds with Muth: "Ray didn't hold back if he disagreed with you, but he didn't hold it against you, either."

Goldfeder concurs. "That's the kind of man Ray was. He could turn it off and on in a second. He wasn't two-faced—far from it. He just had this ability to get over stuff quickly and get on with business. He always remembered how important relationships were, and he always was straightforward in communicating. I easily had 100-plus fights with 'Big Daddy' in my eight years. Fights with Ray never left scars. He was incredibly focused and kept everything in its proper place."

Lawson states, "I admired Ray. He was passionate when he adopted a cause. It was the right thing to do and he'd fight to the mat for it." While he was usually right, Ray Muth could be real wrong, too. He didn't always embrace change, and the department and community were changing fast. The department had always been a blue collar organization of farmers, small businessmen and laborers, and

now yuppies were coming. With the growth forced upon the Ashburn Volunteer Fire Department came an inevitable threat: someday they were going to have to accept...women. It was enough to make grown men weep and wives scream. The company bylaws had stipulated that only "white males" could join. When Muth became chief in 1976, the board dropped the "white", but dug in its heels about the males-only clause.

Muth was violently opposed to admitting women to membership, as were most of the firemen and their wives. They screamed and hollered, recalls Byrne. "Wives won't let us come to the firehouse if there are women here! The men will all quit!" Muth roared that it "would be the ruination of the company. The fire department is going to fold up!" The argument raged for years. Then in 1980, President Byrne rewrote the bylaws and quietly omitted the word "male". Nobody noticed the omission...until Anne Marie Mason walked in the door in 1989.

Muth had also stubbornly opposed adding rescue services. He was chief, and he didn't want any damned ambulances in his bays. Melvin and Lawson, who succeeded Muth as chief in 1986, told Muth that he was wrong. Ashburn was growing, and it needed a rescue service. They fought hard for the ambulance, and in the end "Ray came around 100%", smiles Melvin.

In 1989, Muth was now president and Lawson chief. Anne Marie Mason was the first to volunteer for rescue services, and the first woman to apply for

membership. With the "male" clause eliminated, they had to accept her application, but there would not be an EMT class for another year. Chief Lawson told Anne Marie she should go to fire school in the meantime. Mason didn't want to, didn't think she could do it, but most of all, if she failed, Ray Muth would be able to use that failure to prove women had no place in the company. "Ray fought hard against my joining the department, and against my going to fire school," Mason remembers.

Mason did go to fire school, never did go to EMT school and for two and a half years she was the only woman in the Ashburn Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department. Over time, "Ray and I became great friends," she says. She earned their respect, and Muth accepted that he had lost the battle. It was he who taught Mason how to pump a truck. They worked well together and became partners. She was his vice president, and when she was elected president, Muth was her vp.

With the passing of Ray Muth, Sr. grieves Anne Marie Mason, "the county has lost a resource it can never replace. He took so much knowledge and wisdom away." But the man never suffered a boring day, never lived an aimless moment. Son Ricky summed up a life well spent: "Dad had at least 35 years doing what he loved and knowing he was good at it."

"One thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve."

.....Albert Schweitzer

Submitted by Karen McKay

RECRUIT CLASS #8

Recruit Class # 8 started on May 8, 2003. The 16 recruits are going through 20 grueling weeks of fire, EMS, hazmat, extrication, EVOC, and car seat safety training. The class will have their challenge exercises on September 26th.

Recruit Class # 8 will graduate on October 3rd. The graduation will be held at Heritage High School in Leesburg, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The Recruit Training Staff is headed up by Captain Corey Parker, Lieutenants Dannie Wilson, Josh Cooper, Jeff Bailey and Instructor Wally Burris.

**Please Send Articles
and Photos to Frankie
at Fire & Rescue**

or

**E-MAIL ARTICLES TO:
frust@loudoun.gov**

**Submission Deadline
1st week of month
prior to issue month**



Recruit Joe Neiberger proudly holding up the # 8, for Recruit Class # 8, which was cut out of a car from auto extrication class.

The recruits are from the following areas:

Joe Neiberger-Leesburg, Virginia
Steven Staley-Frederick, Maryland
Aaron Jacobs-Greene, New York
Patrick Dougherty-Harpers Ferry, West Virginia
Brian Fluharty-Mannington, West Virginia
Kyle Stephens-Warrenton, Virginia
Mark Wynkoop-Leesburg, Virginia
Ted Williams-Aldie, Virginia
Tracy Lane-Ashburn, Virginia
Jasen Dodson-Leesburg, Virginia
Jeremy Dorsey-Knoxville, Maryland
Jeff Dunn-Leesburg, Virginia
Phil Abruzzese-Rockville, Maryland
Mike Pisauo-Moosic, Pennsylvania
Ed Butler-Sterling, Virginia
Robin Hepp-Kensington, Maryland

Submitted by Jeff Bailey, LCFR

Live Fire Training—Continued from Page 3

to continue the drill effort.

The day was ruled a success as fire fighters gained exposure to live fire in a realistic setting, the citizen got their house demolished and there were no injuries. Special thanks go out to the Sterling Volunteer Rescue Squad and members of the Canteen Committee as they worked to keep all of the fire fighters well hydrated and properly rehabilitated between evolutions. Their hard work paid off as no fire fighters suffered any heat related injuries.

Additional thanks go out to the LCFR Captain Kevin Wright and the staffing for Tower 11 as they assisted by pre-ventilating the structure.

Submit-

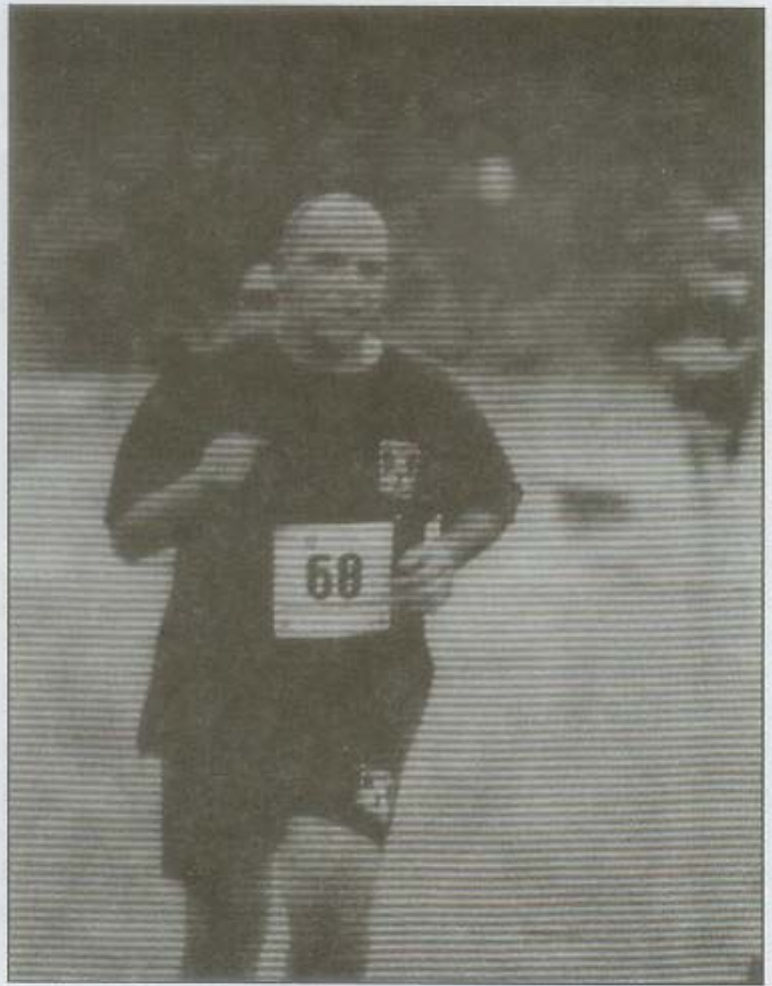
July 20, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

On July 19, 2003 my wife and I were on our way home through Leesburg from West Virginia when a tire on our car went flat. We are both in our seventies and I have heart trouble and was concerned about getting the tire changed. We stopped across the street from a gas station and Recruit Williams approached us and offered assistance.

Recruit Williams was very respectful to us and offered to change the tire. He took care of the problem and put the flat tire and tools away for us. I offered him some money for his help but he refused it. We appreciate what he did for us and were glad that he just seemed to come out of nowhere to help us. In today's society it isn't often that people take the extra time or effort to help others. Your organization is fortunate to have a young man like Recruit Williams. We are grateful that he came along when he did and wish him the best in his career with the Fire Department.

Sincerely,
Carl E. Blevins
Ruth B. Blevins
Woodbridge, Virginia



David Herman, of the Loudoun County Department of Fire-Rescue Services-Station 4, participating in the Round Hill Day 5 k Race on May 24th, 2003.